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SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-seventh year

Letter dated 28 July 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

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On behalf of the Permanent Representatives to the United Nations of the States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the Joint Communiqué of the Twenty-Fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, issued at Manila on 22 July 1992.

I should be grateful if you could arrange to have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 28, 30, 33, 35, 69, 79, 80, 81, 83, 85, 97, 98 and 125 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) CHEW Tai Soo

ANNEX

Joint Communiqué of the Twenty-Fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting issued at Manila on 22 July 1992

INTRODUCTION

1. The Twenty-Fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was held at Manila on 21 and 22 July 1992. The Meeting was formally opened by His Excellency Mr. Fidel V. Ramos, President of the Republic of the Philippines.

2. The Meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam; His Excellency Mr. Ali Alatas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia; His Excellency Datuk Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia; His Excellency Mr. Raul S. Manglapus, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines; His Excellency Mr. Wong Kan Seng, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Singapore; His Excellency Mr. Arsa Sarasin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand; and their respective delegations.

3. His Excellency Mr. Rusli Noor, Secretary-General of the ASEAN Secretariat, and members of his staff were also present.

4. His Excellency Mr. Maimu Raka-Nou, Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Papua New Guinea, attended the open sessions as special observer.

5. His Excellency Mr. Qian Qichen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, and His Excellency Mr. Andrei Kozyrev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, attended the open sessions as guests of the Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee.

6. His Excellency Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam, Foreign Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, and His Excellency Mr. Phoun Sipraseuth, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, also attended the opening session. In a separate ceremony, they handed over their respective instruments of accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia.

7. His Excellency Mr. Raul S. Manglapus, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, chaired the Meeting. His Excellency Mr. Wong Kan Seng, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Singapore, was elected Vice-Chairman.

OPENING ADDRESS

8. In his opening address, His Excellency Mr. Fidel V. Ramos, President of the Republic of the Philippines, stated that the openness and flexibility of ASEAN accounted for its success, evidenced by its dialogue partner relationships and the interest shown by other countries. Of specific significance are the special observer status of Papua New Guinea and the accession of Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia. Noting a "season of grace for building confidence", he urged for ASEAN cooperation in at least six areas: defence cooperation, including more military consultations and technical exchange, training and exercises; economic cooperation, including trade liberalization and increased access to Western markets; technology transfer; regional environmental protection; mechanisms to quell piracy as well as the illicit drug trade; and ways to deal with large-scale worker migration. He stressed that the most effective way of enhancing regional security was the strengthening of economic cooperation. As he underscored the need for an urgent solution to the rival claims in the South China Sea and for a greater role of the United Nations in conflict resolution, he called for a common vision of regional security and enhanced economic cooperation for its own sake, for a better life for ASEAN peoples and for greater political stability. As he reiterated the Philippines' commitment to the ASEAN Free Trade Area, free enterprise and private initiative, he affirmed ASEAN unity in ethnicity, culture and aspiration in common action to accelerate the economic growth and cultural development in a spirit of equality and friendship to attain the fullness of freedom, peace and prosperity for this generation and for posterity.

INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL SITUATION

9. The Foreign Ministers had a full and wide-ranging exchange of views on current international and regional developments. They pledged to consult closely with a view to reaching a common position on issues of special concern to ASEAN.

10. The Foreign Ministers noted the profound impact of the end of the cold war and of East-West confrontation in terms of new strategic uncertainties and fresh opportunities. They welcomed the emergence of the newly independent States in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and noted the encouraging reforms being instituted to bring about political and economic stability in the region.

11. The Foreign Ministers expressed deep concern over the deteriorating situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and called for an immediate cessation of hostilities. They urged all parties concerned to extend their full cooperation to the United Nations and all peace initiatives.

12. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the establishment of the Interim Government in Afghanistan and expressed the hope that the ongoing process of national reconciliation and reconstruction would contribute positively to the speedy recovery of Afghanistan and also to the restoration of peace and stability in the region.

13. Pursuant to the decision of the ASEAN Heads of Government at their 4th Meeting, held in Singapore on 27 and 28 January 1992, on enhancing regional political and security cooperation, the Foreign Ministers noted that a Special Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials on Regional Security was held at Manila on 25 and 26 June 1992, as well as the reconvening of the Working Group on the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in South-East Asia and the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. They directed the Working Group to complete its work.

14. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the accession by Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia and expressed confidence that the Treaty would provide the framework for wider and fruitful regional cooperation for the entire South-East Asian region.

15. The Foreign Ministers also approved the applications of Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic for observer status at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, immediately after the submission of their respective instruments of accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia.

16. The Foreign Ministers reiterated the readiness of the ASEAN countries to participate actively in the reconstruction of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam.

17. The Foreign Ministers expressed the view that any adverse development in the South China Sea directly affected the peace and security in the region. They emphasized that any territorial or jurisdictional dispute should be resolved by peaceful means, without resort to force. They urged all parties concerned to exercise self-restraint with a view to creating a positive climate for the resolution of these disputes. The Foreign Ministers noted that the Workshops on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea initiated and hosted by Indonesia had contributed to a better understanding of the issues involved. They also noted that the informal and unofficial format of the Workshops had enabled open and frank discussions to take place. The Foreign Ministers commended all parties concerned to apply the principles incorporated in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia as the basis for establishing a code of international conduct over the area. The Foreign Ministers decided to issue a separate declaration on this matter.

18. The Foreign Ministers maintained that environmental and human rights concerns should not be made as conditionalities in economic and development cooperation. They noted that basic human rights, while universal in character, were governed by the distinct culture and history of, and

socio-economic conditions in each country, and that their expression and application in the national context were within the competence and responsibility of each country.

CAMBODIA

19. Cognizant of the initial success of the implementation of the Paris Agreement on the Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodian Conflict signed on 23 October 1991, the Foreign Ministers viewed with concern the current difficulties in implementing Phase II of the Agreement.

20. In this regard, the Foreign Ministers urged all parties in Cambodia to cooperate fully in the implementation of the Agreement in order to end the sufferings of the people.

21. The Foreign Ministers reiterated their recognition of the Supreme National Council as the sole legitimate body and source of authority in Cambodia and called on all parties concerned to safeguard the integrity of the Council, under the leadership of His Royal Highness Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk.

22. The Foreign Ministers also expressed their full support for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), which is playing a pivotal role in the peace process. They also expressed appreciation to countries that had contributed resources, including manpower, to UNTAC to ensure its successful operation.

23. The Foreign Ministers also welcomed the pledges of support by the international community made during the Ministerial Conference on Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Cambodia, held in Tokyo on 22 June 1992, and expressed the hope that more of such support would be forthcoming.

INDOCHINESE ASYLUM SEEKERS

24. The Foreign Ministers expressed concern that problems still remain in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan of Action that hinder its accomplishment within the three-year time-frame agreed to at the 1989 International Conference on Indochinese Refugees at Geneva. They stressed that the problem of "residual" needed to be addressed urgently as tens of thousands of "screened-out" asylum seekers still remained in camps in the region. In this connection, they called for acceleration of the resettlement of refugees in third countries and of the repatriation of non-refugees to their respective countries of origin.

25. The Foreign Ministers regretted the substantial cut in the budget for activities of the Plan of Action, which hampered their implementation. They strongly urged the international community to provide the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees with the necessary financial resources to ensure the implementation of the Plan of Action so that countries of temporary refuge or first asylum would not be left with any "residuals".

THE MIDDLE EAST

26. The Foreign Ministers reiterated their support for the continuation of the Middle East peace process under the auspices of the United Nations to address the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and other relevant resolutions. On the situation in Lebanon, the Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their support for the full implementation of the 1989 Taif Agreement and Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

27. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the initiative taken by the United States of America and the Russian Federation in co-sponsoring a regional peace conference for direct negotiations on the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict, which constitute the main source of instability and tension in the region.

SOUTH AFRICA

28. The Foreign Ministers expressed grave concern over the continuing violence in South Africa and the breakdown in the constitutional negotiations. They called for an end to the violence and for the creation of a climate of reconciliation that would allow for the resumption of talks. They supported the call for a United Nations role in helping put back on track the constitutional negotiations that would lead to the establishment of a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa.

THE TENTH NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT

29. The Foreign Ministers expressed their support for the leadership role to be played by Indonesia in hosting the Tenth Conference of the Heads of State/Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, to be held at Jakarta from 1 to 8 September 1992. They expressed the hope that the Summit would serve as an opportunity for the Movement to contribute to the shaping of a just and equitable new world order.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES

30. In reviewing the international economic situation, the Foreign Ministers expressed concern at the decline of world output, the deceleration of trade growth in 1991 and the uncertain prospects for recovery in 1992. This situation has adversely affected the growth prospects of developing countries. They stressed that the role of industrialized countries remained central to the revival of the growth of the world economy. Therefore, the Foreign Ministers urged these countries vigorously to pursue policies aimed at promoting sustained non-inflationary world economic growth.

31. The Foreign Ministers emphasized that in the current difficult world economic environment, the need for a successful Uruguay Round and a strengthened multilateral trading system was now more urgent to both developing and developed countries. Failure of the Round could only further restrict economic growth opportunities, encourage protectionist policies and seriously weaken the multilateral trading system. Therefore, the Foreign Ministers strongly urged the major players to demonstrate their political will and take positive steps to ensure without further delay a balanced, meaningful and satisfactory conclusion of the Uruguay Round.

32. The Foreign Ministers expressed dismay over the failure to conclude the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations owing to the stalemate on agriculture between major players. They expressed disappointment that the G-7 Summit at Munich failed to produce any progress for the Round.

33. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their view that large and powerful economic groupings among developed countries must strengthen an open international economic regime, in particular, an open multilateral trading system. The Ministers expressed their resolve to exert all efforts to promote an open international trading system.

34. Noting the competing demands for capital and investment resources, the Foreign Ministers underscored the need to increase global savings required for structural adjustments and reconstruction efforts, with a view to revitalizing world economic growth.

35. On the external debt crisis, the Foreign Ministers welcomed the progress made recently in the implementation of the debt relief approaches. They reiterated the need for a coordinated tripartite approach involving debtors, creditor countries and financial institutions to take steps to alleviate the debt burden of developing countries, far beyond the scope of the current terms and to allow for recovery, growth and development in the countries concerned. In this connection, the Foreign Ministers endorsed the idea of a major write-off of debts by official donors and commercial banks as well as by multilateral institutions.

36. The Foreign Ministers reiterated that environment and development were mutually interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The right to development was a fundamental right of all peoples and measures for the protection of the environment should support economic growth and sustainable development. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed that ASEAN should strengthen joint actions in countering the anti-tropical-timber campaigns in the major developed countries.

37. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the convening of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992, and viewed the Earth Summit not as an end in itself but as a new beginning for a global partnership in attaining sustainable development in both developed and developing countries. In this context, it is imperative that the developed countries and the multilateral financial institutions implement the commitments made at Rio by granting new and additional financial resources and environmentally sound technologies to the developing countries.

38. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the declaration of the United Nations Security Council of 31 January 1992, which recognized "that peace and prosperity are indivisible and that lasting peace and stability require effective international cooperation for the eradication of poverty and the promotion of a better life for all in larger freedom". The Foreign Ministers also reiterated their commitment to the new partnership for development forged at the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia. In this partnership, developed and developing countries committed themselves to engage in continuous and constructive dialogue to achieve a more efficient and more equitable world economy.

39. The Foreign Ministers reiterated their view that the emerging global economic order must provide for more equal economic opportunities for all nations. Noting that aggregate net flows to the developing countries in 1991 had declined in real terms, they urged the international community to intensify efforts to provide substantial development finance to complement domestic resources to improve developing countries' prospects for sustaining growth-oriented adjustment and poverty alleviation. They also called upon the industrialized countries and the multilateral financial institutions to intensify their efforts to promote foreign direct investment in developing countries. Finally, the Foreign Ministers underscored the importance of a more favourable external environment for the growth and development of developing countries and urged the industrialized countries to establish a genuinely open multilateral trading sytem.

IMPLEMENTATION OF FOURTH ASEAN SUMMIT DECISIONS

40. The Foreign Ministers affirmed ASEAN's commitment to the decision of the 4th meeting of the ASEAN Heads of Government, held in Singapore on 27 and 28 January 1992, to establish an ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) within 15 years. The Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction with the progress made towards the implementation of the Agreement on the Common Effective Preferential Tariff Scheme for AFTA. This Agreement, together with the Framework Agreement on Enhancing Economic Cooperation, was a significant step forward for ASEAN and firmly set economic cooperation as the major item on the ASEAN agenda.

41. The Foreign Ministers signed the Protocol Amending the Agreement on the Establishment of the ASEAN Secretariat to streamline and strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat. The enhanced status and enlarged mandate of the new ASEAN Secretary-General and the increase in the number of staff in the ASEAN Secretariat recruited on an open basis will enable the ASEAN Secretariat to play a greater role in promoting ASEAN cooperation.

SELECTION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ASEAN

42. The Foreign Ministers agreed to recommend to the ASEAN Heads of Government the appointment of His Excellency Dato Ajit Singh as Secretary-General of ASEAN effective 1 January 1993.

43. The Foreign Ministers also expressed their profound appreciation to the outgoing Secretary-General of the ASEAN Secretariat, His Excellency Mr. Rusli Noor, for his dedicated services and invaluable contributions to ASEAN.

INTRA-ASEAN COOPERATION

44. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the progress of activities in several areas of intra-ASEAN cooperation.

45. In the area of information, the Foreign Ministers welcomed the decision of the Second Conference of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information, held at Kuala Lumpur on 1 and 2 August 1991, to create a greater awareness of ASEAN in the region and to project its image more effectively internationally. They fully concurred on the need for a more balanced flow of information.

46. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the results of the 13th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry, held at Chiang Rai from 31 October to 2 November 1991, which identified the areas where ASEAN cooperation in agriculture, food and forestry in the 1990s would be further strengthened, especially the joint promotion of ASEAN agricultural products. They also welcomed the decisions of the 4th Meeting of ASEAN Ministers of Health, held at Jakarta on 4 and 5 December 1991, to exchange health information in ASEAN, with emphasis on AIDS and environmental health.

47. The Foreign Ministers fully endorsed the Singapore Resolution on Environment and Development adopted by the Fifth Conference of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Environment, held in Singapore on 17 and 18 February 1992, which sets the directions for ASEAN to enhance its ongoing and future cooperation on environment and development.

48. In view of the increasingly strong competition to attract foreign investment by the developed as well as the developing countries, the Foreign Ministers agreed to encourage their respective officials responsible for investment promotion to conduct regular consultations with a view to increasing inflows of foreign investments to ASEAN countries.

COOPERATION WITH DIALOGUE COUNTRIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

49. The Foreign Ministers endorsed the recommendations of the 4th Meeting of the 25th ASEAN Standing Committee to implement the decision of the Fourth ASEAN Summit to strengthen ASEAN's cooperative relationships with its dialogue partners. While these cooperative relationships have made significant progress, the Foreign Ministers supported the thrust of the recommendations that ASEAN should strengthen the existing dialogue mechanisms and develop new ones where necessary for the enhancement of economic relations with the dialogue countries, especially ASEAN's major economic partners. They also noted with appreciation the active role now being played by the private sector in the dialogue process.

ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION

50. The Foreign Ministers noted that the Second Senior Officials' Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, held at Bangkok from 22 to 24 June 1992, adopted recommendations on the nature and structure of the APEC Support Mechanism and the funding arrangements, which will be considered at the Fourth APEC Ministerial Meeting at Bangkok on 10 and 11 September 1992. They noted that the establishment of a support mechanism would mark a new phase in the organizational evolution of the APEC process.

EAST ASIA ECONOMIC CAUCUS

51. The Foreign Ministers, having considered the outcome of the joint consultative meeting held on 19 July 1992 at Manila, in accordance with the decision of the Fourth ASEAN Summit, decided to request the Secretary-General of the ASEAN Secretariat, as Chairman of the joint consultative meeting, to study an appropriate modality that would complete the elaboration of the concept of EAEC with a view to accomplishing its realization, taking into account the ideas presented at the meeting as well as earlier discussions held on the matter.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF ASEAN

52. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the various programmes and activities that had been and would be undertaken to commemorate the twenty-fifth year of ASEAN. They also encouraged the implementation of such activities by ASEAN committees in third countries for the rest of the year.

TWENTY-SIXTH ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING

53. The Foreign Ministers agreed that the 26th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting would be held in Singapore in July 1993.

54. The delegations of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand expressed their sincere and deep appreciation to the Government and people of the Republic of the Philippines for the warm and generous hospitality and excellent facilities and arrangements made for the Meeting.

55. The Meeting was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN friendship and solidarity.